modernisation and expansion of the country's telecommunication system ; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) and (b) It is proposed to modernise and expand the telecommunications services in the country by using all the available resources and participation of both the private and the public sector. While the public sector will continue to play a major role in the production of telecommunication equipment for modernisation and expansion ; keeping in view the large variety and quantities of equipment that will be required, it has been decided to liaberalise the policy with regard to manufacture and permit production of various types of terminal equipment, etc. used at the subscribers' premises in the private sector.

Central aid to Bhopal gas victims

135. SHRI RAMCHANDRA BHARADWAJ :
DR. H P. SHARMA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) how much Central aid has so far been given for the relief of the victims of Bhopal gas leakage of December, 1984 ;

(b) what are the details of the schemes wholly or Partially financed therewith ; and

(c) whether any instances of diversion of central funds to schemes other than relief schemes has come to Government's notice and if so, what are the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETRO CHEMICALS (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH) : (a) and (b) The Central Government has so far given Rs. 40 crores to the State Government comprising Rs. 20 crores as medium term loan and Rs. 20 crores as ways and means advance for the relief operations. State Government is spending the money for providing relief and rehabilitation for the victims. These include providing ex-gratia relief and distribution of foodgrains, medical facilities, vocational training is well as suitable means of employment or self employment.

(c) Does not arise.

Maternity Leave to Women Employee of Telephone Department

136. SHRIMATI ILA BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs has directed the General Managers of Telephones all over the country that they should not entertain maternity leave applications from any Woman employee who has not changed her name after marriage ;

(b) if so, what is the justification for such an order ;

(c) whether the said order is based upon any Act or Government order ; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

(d) However, there was a case from Gujarat Circle when a Lady Telephone Operator applied for maternity leave though she was not married. It was decided in consultation with Department of Personnel and Training that maternity leave can not be granted to unmarried female Govt. servant.

Night Air Mail Service through Vayudoot

137. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a night air mail service is being planned through the Vayudoot; and

(b) if so, which cities are at present being connected for such night airmail service ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This will depend on the cities which will be covered by the Night Air Cargo Service proposed to be introduced by Vayudoot.

STD system with neighbouring countries

138. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are proposing to introduce an intensive STD system with neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ; and

(c) which of the metropolitan cities of the country now have STD facilities for connecting London and New York and which other cities are likely to have these facilities and by when ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The feasibility and accounting procedure, are under discussion with the counter-parts of the neighbouring countries.

(c) The 4 Metropolitan cities viz. Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras have International Subscriber Dialling facilities with 6 foreign countries viz. United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, France, Singapore and Hong Kong.

STD facility to New York is not available from any city so far.

It is proposed to extend gradually international subscriber dialling facility from all cities connected to National Trunk Automatic Exchange Newtwork. In the first phase the facility will be extended from Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Trivandrum in about a year.

Post Offices in private premises

139. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANARAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) number of Post Offices in the country which are not housed in their own buildings, State-wise ;

(b) annual rent being paid State-wise and total rent paid till 30th September, 1985;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to construct their own buildings for the Post Offices to avoid payment of heavy rent ;